



April 12, 2006

Dear Community Friends –

Spring Clean 2006

It's time again for community, school and business volunteers to sign up for Spring Clean, Seattle's premier cleanup event. Seattle's 20th Annual Spring Clean runs April 1st – June 4th 2006. Past Spring Clean activities included painting out graffiti, picking up litter and illegally dumped materials, stenciling storm drains, cleaning school yards, removing invasive plants in watersheds and planting trees.

The City of Seattle supports these neighborhood efforts with bags, free disposal, tools, and help with project design, publicity, and recruitment. Spring Clean information, including neighborhood cleanup activities and sign-up packets, is available by calling 206.233.7187 or visiting <http://www.seattle.gov/util>.

Spring Clean in Southeast

While there are many events happening throughout the city, we want to bring your attention to a few happening in Southeast Seattle this **Saturday, April 15, 2006:**

Hillman City – meet at 9:00 am at VelDyke Realty, 5500 Rainier Ave S. Mayor Nickels will be in attendance at 9:30am to address those gathered. Bring work gloves. Snacks and tools will be provided. For more information, contact Diane Skwiercz, 725-5791.

Rainier & Othello – Meet at 9:30am at the Shell station at Rainier Ave S. and S. Othello Street. Bring work gloves, shovels, trash pickup tools, and snacks. Contact Mona Lee, 721-5672 for more information.

Rainier Beach – meet at 9:00 am at the Henderson Plaza of the Mapes Creek Walkway (across the street from Rainier Beach High School). For more information, contact Barb Biondo 323-9671.

Additionally, the **Sunnyview Heights Triangle** neighborhood is hosting a neighborhood work party on Saturday, April 22, 2006. They are gathering at 9am at the intersection of 39th Ave S. & Carkeek Dr. S. Contact Chris Morrow, 723-8179, for more details.

Why It Is Important

In my career as a Crime Prevention Coordinator, I have come to notice a few things. One of them is this:
Neighborhoods that look like people care tend to have less crime than

those neighborhoods that give the appearance that people don't care. Take a moment to think about our communities and what they look like. In those areas where it seems people don't care, how "safe" do you feel? When you think of a "bad" part of town, how does that part of town *look* to you? Now think about parts of our community where you feel safe. How do *they* look? Where do you think criminals are more likely to want to hang out: in an area where people are out and about, engaged in their community and likely to report suspicious or illegal activity, or; in an area that is graffiti-ridden, trash is strewn around, vegetation is overgrown, abandoned cars line the streets, and no one interacts with each other or reports anything to anyone? In the latter neighborhood, what message is being sent?

It doesn't matter if the neighborhood – or block – is in Columbia City, Phinney Ridge or Madison Valley. What matters is that people who live and work there show they actively care about their community. They do that by picking up litter (and by not littering themselves), removing graffiti as soon as possible, maintaining their properties, and removing abandoned vehicles.

This is only a partial list of things people can do to show they care about their community. *You* can show you care by participating in one of the planned Spring Clean events, or you can get together with your neighbors and do your own.

As I have previously written, "*Neighborhoods have the level of crime that they tolerate.*" How a neighborhood *looks* shows the level of care of those *in* the neighborhood. It also sends the message as to how much crime they will tolerate. What message do *you* want to send? Think about it.

Until Next time, Take Care and Stay Safe!

Mark Solomon, South Precinct Crime Prevention